

ACTIVITY - INVENTING A GAME AND DESIGNING GAME PIECES

ARTS DISCIPLINE:	Visual Arts
FINE ARTS STANDARD:	Standard 1 - Visual art media, techniques and processes
THE BENCHMARK:	Understand how different visual art media and techniques are used to express ideas, experiences and stories
GRADES:	5-8

A.R.T.S. TRUNK OBJECTS

- Example of clay game piece (in set of hand-made game pieces)
- Spinning top
- Game packets
- *Handbook of American Indian Games*, book
- *Parlor Games*, book
- *Storytelling Games*, book

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Wet-set clay (a Crayola product)
- tooth picks
- acrylic paint
- small brushes
- cardboard

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Play is necessary for the healthy development of children, helping them acquire physical, social and cognitive skills. Play is also necessary for adults, providing welcome release from the stress and strain of everyday life.

Games are a specialized form of play. They are usually based on a set of rules and a predictable outcome. Traditional games, or folk games, have been passed from child to child and generation to generation by word of mouth and demonstration. Similar types of games can be found in different cultures around the world. Common types include: board games, guessing games, games of chance, miming games, blindfold games, hopping games, hiding games, and shooting games.

Characteristics of traditional games:

- Children organize their own games
- Rules are not written down
- Rules are negotiable



- Variations or adaptations are often made to the game
- Games are learned by observation, not instruction
- Games do not require manufactured equipment. (The game *Pog*, so popular a few years ago, was originally created by Hawaiian children who used milk caps for playing pieces.)
- Games might be cooperative or competitive

PROCEDURE

- Share background information and trunk objects with students.
- Discuss the differences between commercially made games and traditional games.
- Pose the questions:
 - Does the U.S. have a history of sustained playing of folk games? Why? Why not?
 - What are some of the common characteristics of these games: hopscotch, London Bridge, hide and seek, jump rope, Jacks, and marbles?
- Invite students to relate stories about how they learned a traditional game.
- Compile a class list of games under the following categories (include traditional and commercial games):
 - games of skill
 - games of chance
 - games of strength
- Work in groups to invent a game that includes the movement of game pieces.
 - Brainstorm ideas
 - Select most interesting one
 - Agree on the object of the game and the rules of play. Write them down
 - Design the game pieces and the "field" on which it will be played
 - Sculpt the game pieces from clay
 - *Process tips:* Joining two pieces of clay together requires:
 - scoring: scratching clay with tooth pick on both surfaces to be joined
 - welding: smooth over the edges of the two clay pieces joined together; add a thin coil of clay around the edges and smooth again to strengthen the join; allow to air dry then fire in the kiln
 - Paint the game pieces
 - Use cardboard and paint or fabric to create the playing "field"
 - Assign friends to give the game a "test trial." Make modifications if necessary
 - Decide on a title for the game
 - Conduct a class critique; each group displays their game and explains how to play

ASSESSMENT

- Level of participation by each student.
- Ability to cooperate in group activities.
- Quality of the finished game.
- Personal reflection on the learning experience by each student.

